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3.5(c) SECRET/ 3.5(c)

SUBJ: REACTION IN THE ARGENTINE NAVY TO THE DETENTION OF NAVY LIEUTENANT ALFREDO ASTIZ BY A CIVILIAN COURT; CONCERN OF CIVILIAN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS AS A RESULT OF THE ASTIZ MATTER

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3.3(b)(1)

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TEXT: 1. IN REGARD TO THE CASE OF ARGENTINE NAVY (ARA) LIEUTENANT (LT.) ALFREDO ((ASTIZ)), WHOM A CIVILIAN FEDERAL JUDGE ORDERED DETAINED IN EARLY DECEMBER 1984 ON CHARGES RELATED TO THE KIDNAPPING AND KILLING OF A SWEDISH CITIZEN DURING ARGEXEENTINA'S COUNTERSUBVERSIVE CAMPAIGN, NAVY OFFICERS FEEL THAT ASTIZ TYPIFIES THOSE ARMED FORCES (FFAA) OFFICERS WHO SIMPLY ACTED ON, OR CARRIED OUT, ORDERS DURING THE CAMPAIGN. NAVY OFFICERS SAY THAT ASTIZ AND HIS SITUATION HAVE BECOME AN INSTITUTIONAL MATTER IN THEIR VIEW, RATHER THAN AN INDIVIDUAL COURT CASE. THEY ASSERT THAT ASTIZ HAS BECOME A SYMBOL FOR THE NAVY AND THEY POINT OUT THAT, SINCE ASTIZ COMMITTED NO CRIME AGAINST THE STATE, HE SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS LEFTIST "MONTONERO" LEADER MARIO EDUARDO ((FIRMENICH)).

NAVY OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE SAME 3.3(b)(1)
AGE GROUP AS ASTRIZ, STRESS THE INSTITUTIONAL ASPECT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION.)

2. NAVY OFFICERS BELIEVE THAT, IF ASTIZ IS FOUND GUILTY IN A CIVILIAN COURT OF THE CHARGES AGAINST HIM AND IS SENT TO JAIL, THE CONSEQUENCES COULD BE SERIOUS. OFFICERS SAY THAT THE ARA'S FLAG OFFICERS HAVE DISCUSSED RESIGNING EN MASSE IN PROTEST IF THE CURRENT CASE INVOLVING ASTIZ IS NOT TRANSFERRED TO A COURT MARTIAL. THEY ALSO SAY THE ADMIRALS AND OTHER SENIOR NAVY OFFICERS CONSIDER THE ASTIZ AFFAIR AS PART OF A LEFTIST CAMPAIGN. THEY POINT OUT THAT THE SENIOR ARA OFFICERS HAVE ALLEGED THAT LUIS ((ZAMORA)), THE LAWYER REPRESENTING THE FAMILY OF THE DEAD SWEDISH CITIZEN, IS A MARXIST. THEY SAID THE SENIOR OFFICERS ARE UPSET BECAUSE THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN RELATIONS AND WORSHIP SUPPOSEDLY ASSISTED ZAMORA AND OTHER LAWYERS FOR THE FAMILY BY ALLOWING ONE ((BURGOS)) (FNU) AND ONE ((GERONDO)) (FNU), TWO WITNESSES WHOM THE SENIOR OFFICERS SAY ARE KNOWN "MONTONEROS," TO REENTER ARGENTINA.

3. NAVY OFFICERS HOPE THAT THE VILIAN ADMINISTRATION WILL PRESSURE MIGUEL DEL ((CASTILLO)), THE FEDERAR JUDGE IN CHARGE OF THE ASTIZ CASE, TO TRANSFER THE CASE TO THE COURT MARTIAL SYSTEM. THE OFFICERS ARE NOT OVERLY OPTIMISTIC IN THIS REGARD, BUT THEY BELIEVE THAT THEY HAVE THE SUPPORT OF MINISTER OF DEFENSE RAUL ((BORRAS)) FOR THE TRANSFER.

4. SENIOR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS ARE WORRIED AS A RESULT OF THE ASTIZ AFFAIR, ESPECIALLY BORRAS, WHO SEES THE CASE AS A TEST OF ADMINISTRATION-FFAA RELATIONS AND AS A TEST OF THE ABILITY OF THE TWO TO WORK TOGETHER. BORRAS SUPPORTED THE EFFORTS OF VICE ADMIRAL (VADM) RAMON ANTONIO ((AROSA)), THE CHIEF OF THE NAVY GENERAL STAFF (EMGA), TO OBTAIN THE TRANSFER OF THE ASTIZ CASE FROM THE CIVILIAN COURT SYSTEM AND TO COUNTER WHAT AROSA SEES AS A NARROW VIEW OF THE CASE ON THE PART OF THE ADMINISTRATION. 3.3(b)(1)

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5. ON 10 DECEMBER, PRESIDENT ALFONSIN MET WITH BORRAS AND

Approved for Release: 2018/10/01 C06698589

Approved for Release: 2018/10/01 C06698589 3.5(c)

AROSA. HE EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN WITH THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME OF THE ASTIZ AFFAIR, BUT HE MADE NO COMMITMENTS CONCERNING ANY STEPS WHICH HE MIGHT TAKE.

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